

June, 2005

Good News: May 1st and May 8th

For the first time in 20 years, there was almost no violence on May 1st. The press reported about the “miracle of Kreuzberg” and the “most peaceful May 1st in the last 20 years.” Christians got involved in the peaceful May 1st: They held an ecumenical service at the beginning of the festival, they gathered up trash, played worship music on street corners, and prayed in churches and on the streets. The involvement of Christians made a positive impression on the press and the organizers of “MyFest 2005”.

Also on May 8th, there was no clash between right-wing and left-wing extremists. The demonstration by the Neo-Nazis was circumvented by a peaceful countermarch.

God answered our prayers for a peaceful May 1st and May 8th – we have reason to be thankful. It is obvious that God is giving increasing spiritual authority to those who are praying and getting involved.

The Christians involved are thinking about how their involvement can be increased in the future. Their desire is that May 1st not “just” remains peaceful, but also that people can hear the message of peace in Jesus Christ. (A more complete report can be found at: www.gebet-fuer-berlin.de in the English section.)

Prayer

- **Thank God for a peaceful May 1st and May 8th and for all answers to prayer**
- **Pray for God-directed ideas and inspiration in the planning for next year**

Christopher Street Day

On June 25th, there will be another parade for “Christopher Street Day” (CSD). Every year on this day all over the world, homosexuals take to the streets to demonstrate for more minority rights in society and in politics. The motto in Berlin this year is: “We will shape our Europe!” Among other things, the organizers are demanding:

An all-inclusive national anti-discrimination law adding an appendix to article 3, paragraph 3 of the constitution (concerning sexual identity) for the provision of educating against prejudices against a homosexual lifestyle and encouraging the integration of homosexual lifestyles in schools, child and youth welfare services and sports initiatives. -- That same sex lifestyles be more strongly presented through schoolbooks and tolerant lesson plans dealing with this topic. -- Complete adoption rights for “registered same sex partnerships”

Changes to the law in the last years have shown that the aggressive demands of the homosexuals are being heard more and more. Their public relation work and lobbying has been very successful. The general public hardly takes notice of the fact that there are other opinions, too. Shouldn't Christians take a public stand on this issue?

Just as we experienced on May 1st and 8th, it is important that Christians don't just pray “in the back room” at such events, but also on-site on the streets. We desire to see many praying Christians along the parade route.

Prayer:

- **Pray for a loss of attractiveness – for a decline in participants and observers**
- **Pray that the demands will not be successful**
- **That politicians and journalists will have the courage to stand up against the demands of the lobby of homosexual groups**
- **Pray that many will come to Jesus and for help for those involved in a homosexual lifestyle**

Neglected and Abused Children

The growing number of known neglected and abused children in Berlin has opened a wide discussion about the protection of minors. In 2004, the police registered 398 cases of abuse, 40 more than 2003, and 255 cases of neglect. Police estimate that in reality the numbers could be as high as 8000 cases. Unlike the numbers of unreported sex offences which can be estimated with some sureness, there is no sure knowledge about unreported cases of neglect and child abuse. Most cases of neglected or abused children are most often discovered accidentally. However public awareness is growing. People are no longer turning their heads, but are taking action. Neighbors are informing the authorities. Even so, every case is one too many. In order to cut down on child abuse, we need a large coalition between committed neighbors, authorities, and Christians who pray and help.

Sources: Berliner Morgenpost from May 18, 2005 and Kindermotdienst (emergency help for children in need) Phone: 610061

Prayer

- **Pray for God's help in prevention and exposure**
- **Pray that public awareness will continue to grow**
- **Pray for changes in law that will enable Youth Services to act more quickly and effectively**
- **Pray for more projects sponsored by Christians which can serve as models of ways to help in this area**

Finance Senator Thilo Sarrazin

Dr. Thilo Sarrazin, member of the SPD, is married and has two sons. He was born 60 years ago in Gera, grew up in Recklinghausen and lived for several decades in Bonn. He worked for a long time as an economist in the Federal Ministry of Finances. He negotiated the monetary union for Theo Waigel. Later he became the State Secretary in Rhineland-Westphalia. Positions in management with the Treuhand and the Bahn AG followed. He has been the Finance Senator in Berlin since January, 2002.

He hasn't made many friends in this position, and surveys often show him at the bottom of the popularity scale. But the Finance Senator is not concerned about popularity, but rather about reducing the catastrophic size of debt in our city. Interest payments on Berlin's debt alone are 2.3 billion Euros per year. For Berlin this means that the new indebtedness per resident per year is higher than the entire per capita

debt of Bavaria. The capital city does in fact take in 25 percent more than the average of federal states, but it also has 35 percent higher expenditures.

During a speech about the budget, the Finance Senator said, "Especially in light of demographic development, the entire nation has completely overextended itself. The bill for this will be presented in the next decades, when the number of people of working age declines and the number of retired people increases. Getting the federal budget in order is not enough, but it a mandatory prerequisite for coping with the future. The one who disregards this is not only carelessly negligent, but also politically and morally irresponsible."

According to Mr. Sarrazin, the financial problems of the federal state of Berlin can be solved only on the side of expenditures and not on the side of income. For this reason, he has enacted a strict belt-tightening in all departments, which has led to financial restraints felt by all public authorities in Berlin.

Prayer

- **Pray for blessing for Thilo Sarrazin and his family**
- **Pray for the success of the rehabilitation of the budget**
- **Pray for creative ideas on how to save, as well as ways to promote the economy**

Calling all Nations

At last the date has been set for the international praise event in the Berlin Olympic Stadium: July 15th, 2006. This date has an interesting historical background. In 1936, a fatal call went out from Berlin: the world's youth were to gather in the Berlin Olympic Stadium for sport contests. In reality, the NS-regime was looking for international recognition, but was still disguising its inhuman ideology. Now, 70 years later, Christians are calling all nations of the world to Berlin (Calling all Nations). Christians from all over the world will gather together to praise Jesus. There will be a praise concert in preparation for this event on June 25th, 2005. (See dates)

Prayer

- **Prayer for smooth preparations and wide support for this event in the Olympic Stadium**
- **Pray for a motivating and inspiring praise concert on June 25th.**

Keeping On

Joachim Zeller, mayor of Berlin-Mitte, has prematurely resigned his position as head of the CDU in the federal state of Berlin. Most probably he will be replaced by the current EU representative and long-term Berlin politician Ingo Schmitt. We do not anticipate that this would bring about the needed political turnabout or a new beginning. A front-runner candidate who could lead the party's election campaign is still not in sight. For this reason, we continue to pray for the "Köhler factor" in Berlin. When Horst Köhler was appointed the Federal President of Germany, one real-

ized that it is indeed possible for new and beneficial political personnel alternatives to appear quite suddenly.

Finances

The financial situation of Together for Berlin (Gemeinsam für Berlin e.V.) is currently very grave. We are thankful for the past three years of God's wonderful provision, but we need your continued prayers in this area. There is a tension between the obvious dynamic of the spiritual development, which is being initiated by GfB on the one side, and the financial deficiency on the other. Prayer goals for 2005 are, along with the elimination of the current crisis: increase of regular donations from 35% to 50% of the budget and an increase to 20 churches (currently 13) that regularly support GfB. At the moment, we are carrying a deficit from the previous months. App. 7.000 € are still needed for the month of May. This is a big challenge, since there are no reserve funds. Unless God answers these prayers, we will have to consider dismissing off one of our staff.

Prayer

- **Pray for the current deficit to be filled**
- **Pray that God will answer our prayer goals for 2005**
- **Pray for God's wonderful intervention through donations we hadn't reckoned with**

Evangelistic Barbeque

From June 22-24, 2005 ON THE MOVE, an evangelistic barbeque sponsored by various churches, will take place in Berlin on the Alexanderplatz. It is a "low-threshold" evangelistic event in the heart of the city. Key elements are food, praise and worship, conversations with and prayer for the guests. Guests can receive a free bratwurst from 5-7 pm each day. Berlin is one of 30 capital cities sponsoring such an event this year.

Prayer:

- **Pray that many passers-by will "taste" the goodness of God**
- **Pray for decisions for Jesus and that contacts to churches will be developed**
- **Pray that Christians will be courageous in every-day evangelism**

Dates

- June 24-25: Prayer for the issues concerning the Christopher Street Day.
For information please mail to redaktion@gebet-fuer-berlin.de
- June 25th, 7:00 pm ROAD TO BERLIN – Praise and Worship Concert with Noel Richards, Lothar Kosse, Tengerin Doo und Walter Heidenreich.
Place: Kirche am Südsterne, Berlin Kreuzberg
Free admission. A collection will be taken to cover costs. Brochures are available through Gemeinsam fuer Berlin.